



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Ukiah Air Attack Base Retardant Jettison Area		
PROJECT LOCATION	Approximately 5-miles east of the city of Ukiah, CA Sections 18 & 19, T15N, R11W; MDB & M	COUNTY	Mendocino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project involves the periodic jettisoning of excess fire retardant and/or jel material from air tankers onto grass and chaparral vegetation along a ridge-top located in the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Cow Mountain Recreation Area near Ukiah, California. CAL FIRE air tankers dispatched to a reported fire from the Ukiah Air Attack Base are at times, while airborne, cancelled prior to dropping retardant/jel. As not all air tankers are capable of landing with a full load of fire retardant/gel, they must jettison a portion of the load to insure a safe landing. The use of this jettison site is conducted under a Memorandum of Understanding with the BLM, which manages the Recreation Area for hiking, camping, horseback riding, bicycling, off-road vehicle use & hunting. The jettison area is closed off to public use.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 7, 15307 & Class 8, 15308 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The minor vegetation disturbance resulting from this project is compatible with land use practices and values associated with a wildland setting. A nine USGS-quad search of the CNDDDB did not identify any rare, threatened or endangered plant or animal species that will be negatively impacted by this project. A site survey has been made of the area by a trained archaeological surveyor. The CAL FIRE Area Archaeologist has been consulted and has determined that this project is exempt from further archaeological review. The retardant/gel-jettison material is non-toxic to terrestrial species. The area on which the excess retardant is jettisoned consists of grass and chaparral vegetation located along a ridge-top, away from watercourses. Retardant is never jettisoned into any drainage, creek or riparian area. CAL FIRE adopted a mitigated negative declaration in 2007 for the routine use of retardants and other fire suppression chemicals (SCH 2007052066).

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit, Resource Management, 17501 N. Highway 101, Willits, CA 95490, Attn. Environmental Coordinator.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING




William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date 10/20/10
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection